

Seven things outsiders notice about New Zealand and Kiwis take for granted



Grant Matthew

Manganui Ski Field is on Mt Taranaki. Skiers and boarders hike to the bottom of the field from the car park.

It's the little things in life.

There are some things migrants, visitors, and expats notice more than you regular everyday New Zealanders.

Aotearoa is consistently ranked as one of the best places in the world to live and work.

So, we've compiled a lighthearted list of highlights that have caught our eye in a completely unscientific rundown of the little things Kiwis take for granted and make New Zealand a second home for many happy people.

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- * [15 things no one told me about living in New Zealand](#)
- * [20 things that happen when you move to New Zealand](#)

HONESTY BOXES



Emily Spink

An honesty box in the South Island.

More like dishonesty "steal me" boxes in other parts of the world. In rural areas, you can stop at the side of the road, grab some free-range eggs, vegetables, fruit, or honey, and pop a few dollars in the money box.

It's honestly a good thing. And very New Zealand.

HUNDREDS OF WELL-KEPT HUTS FOR HIKERS



ALDEN WILLIAMS/FAIRFAX NZ

John Tall Hut in the Travers Valley, Nelson Lakes National Park, is one of 21 huts that has been cleaned and disinfected.

Few countries have a system like the Kiwi back country highway. There are around 1000 managed huts, 950 according to the [Department of Conservation](#), but probably more because enterprising types have been building them since the settler era.

Scotland has some basic shelters, called bothies, Nordic countries have some wilderness huts and many European ski resorts have lodges in the mountains.

Canada and the United States have some too, while Tasmania is the only state in Australia with a New Zealand-style network of huts.



Alden Williams/Fairfax NZ

West Sabine Hut, Nelson Lakes National Park. A classic DOC hut, with firewood.

But the Kiwi tax-funded, access-to-all system is quite special.

There is an entire community dedicated to maintaining ailing huts and documenting disused and lost huts too.

READ MORE: [Backcountry huts of New Zealand - three of the best](#)

'THANK YOU DRIVER'

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This is especially noticeable on buses in Wellington. It's also common in Vancouver, Canada. New Zealanders, while we're on the subject, are generally a polite lot.

Thanks.



N/A

A trolley bus in Wellington.

LOTS AND LOTS OF CATS

There are a lot of cats here. So many the Government want to kill them. Not the domestic kind, phew, so don't worry. Cats are bad, though, and there are a lot of feral moggies out there killing the native birds.

Generally, Kiwis love pets so there are lots of dogs, too. In case they feel left out.



Cameron Burnell

A feral cat on Miramar North Rd in Wellington.

SKIING ON ICE

You learned on ice, and moguls. You can use rope-tows, nutcrackers and t-bars without a second thought. You're not afraid.

Everyone else is sore.



Grant Matthew

Manganui Ski Field, Mt Taranaki and its T-bar.

BUS DRIVER 'TOURS'

Staying with public transport, some bus drivers like to provide a running commentary. They'll give you a potted history of the region you're visiting, stop to let you use the loo, and designate a lunchtime stop for a pie.

TINY SINKS

Yes, tiny sinks. You know, they're in older style houses, especially in properties with a second toilet. They're so small it's difficult to properly wash your hands. Especially if you're a burly bloke.

They can also be found in cafes and family-run garages. Sometimes the hot water tap is so hot it's practically scalding but your hands are so close to the tap's mouth you're almost guaranteed a sharp intake of breath and an "ahhh, ahhh, hot."